

**At Easter,** I brought my mother from the small village where she lives, a peaceful and lovely place. However, when I got home, I heard news that shocked me. A quiet and easygoing couple took their own lives. Suicide in Portugal has been on the rise. Currently, it is the second leading cause of death among teens and young adults. Fleeing from suffering is one of the main reasons for many people to take such destructive and irreversible decision. However, death without Christ does not set one free, but chains him or her eternally. The Bible says life and death are always before us. Because of this, we must fight daily, so that more and more people choose to live their lives through Jesus Christ.

### **We fight for children and teens.**

Our work at the schools is very challenging and wearing. However, it has been an excellent opportunity to bring other hope, Christian values and friendly embraces. Most of these children and teens are children of immigrants and come from unstructured families. I have individually



talked with many students, and seeing their watchful and thirsty eyes is a consolation and motivates me to proceed. Among the many students I have contact with, I would like to share four names with you: Joana (13 years old), David (10 years old), Júlia (12 years old) and Diego (7 years old). Much can the prayer of the righteous accomplish.



### **We fight for our neighbors.**

Walking Lua - my small dog - is an excellent opportunity to talk with and meet our neighbors, aiming, initially, to build relationships of trust. Fortunately, I have already had the chance to speak more directly about faith with **Rosa**. Initially, she was very motivated, but lately she seems a little withdrawn, probably because family opinions and religious prejudice. I also ask for prayers on behalf of **Fernanda** and **Fatima**. I ask for spiritual sensitivity for them and wisdom for me. May the Lord enable me to move from general matters to the Word of Christ, which gives true meaning to life and

gives eternal security. The idea we have is to soon start a small group here at home with these and other acquaintances, with the aim of gaining followers for Christ.

**We fight through prayer.** We are four women of the Church who meet every Thursday for breakfast, for mutual edification and prayer. We pray for one another, but, especially, we pray that God will help us seek other disciples for Him. Prayer has power. Elizabeth (Isabel, in Portuguese), who professes to be an atheist, almost died. She was in a coma and was hospitalized for months. I was amazed when we met this week.

Incredible as it may seem, I think she looks even better and more beautiful than when she had to go to the hospital. Once again, I had the opportunity to tell Elizabeth: "We pray for you!" To my surprise, she smiled. God chose to prolong Elizabeth's life. May she choose life, eternal life through Christ.



**We fight for the world.** The small Baptist Church in Cartaxo is already contributing to World Missions. In June we will have our first missionary conference. The theme we have chosen is "TOGETHER EVERYWHERE". We will have three days of conference in which we will be confronted with the reality of the world, and we will be challenged to continue living lives of witnesses in Cartaxo, in Portugal and in the world.

**My brothers, you have given us the foundational example Missions.** We have learned about - and which to proceed forward on - this righteous path. Let us continue together with our hands on the plough. I like this sentence a lot and I will repeat it here: **THE MISSION CANNOT STOP!**

This is the message of Jesus we announce - "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" – *John 11: 25-26*

*With gratitude,*

Isabel Fernandes